CALLBACK

From NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System

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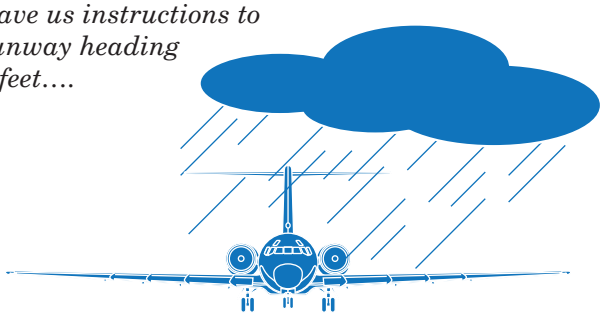
What Would You Have Done?

The season of wintertime operations is here, along with another "interactive" issue of *CALLBACK*. This month we present incidents that required quick decisions on the part of ASRS reporters, usually in snow or icing conditions. How did our reporters do? You be the judge. On the front page you will find "the first half of the story," report excerpts followed by several plausible action choices. On the back page, you will find "the rest of the story," the actions actually taken by reporters to resolve their situations. Each incident will give you a chance to draw on your wintertime operating experience to anticipate what you would have done in the same situation.

The First Half of the Story

Situation #1: "The Left Throttle Would Not Retard" (MD-80 Captain's Report)

■ *Weather at our destination was 500 feet overcast with heavy rain, winds at 230/20, altimeter 29.36. At approximately 4,000 feet in IMC all anti-ice on approximately 20 miles from the airport and 3 miles from ILS intercept, I the pilot flying, noticed the left throttle would not retard to less than 1.35 EPR* [mid-range EPR]. *I directed the First Officer to declare an emergency and consult the QRH for a procedure. The APU was started. The First Officer efficiently completed all tasks. We decided to leave the engine running until landing rollout. Descending through approximately 2,000 feet, the Tower reported a microburst alert with 40 knots gain. Our airspeed increased from 150 knots to 175 knots. I initiated an escape maneuver go-around. Tower gave us instructions to climb runway heading to 4000 feet….*



What would you have done?

- Attempt another ILS approach after stabilizing the aircraft
- Divert to an alternate airport with better weather
- Obtain ATC vectors to troubleshoot the problem with Maintenance
- ? ? ?

Situation #2: "My Climb Would Not Safely Increase" (Piper Cherokee Pilot's Report)

■ *I arrived at the airport early in anticipation of favorable weather to perform several practice IFR approaches at a nearby airport. Unfortunately a layer of fog and haze had set in that reduced visibility at the departure airport below minimums, making an IFR departure an unfavorable option in case I had to return with an emergency. I spent the morning doing cleanup work around the aircraft and performing parts of the preflight checklist including removing the cover, checking oil and tire pressure. The checklist procedures were not performed in the standard order and were executed as part of other tasks. The weather finally broke and the cloud layer had risen high enough to provide for a safe IFR departure. I started the engine and taxied to the runway for run-up. The temperatures were relatively cool in the mid 50's and the engine run-up was normal. After receiving IFR clearance I departed the airport without incident. As part of the climb out I noticed RPM levels were lower then expected and my climb would not safely increase over 500 fpm without speed dropping. In thinking through possible scenarios I realized that in the process of performing my non-standard checklist I may have forgotten to remove the cowling plugs…*

What would you have done?

- Immediately return to the departure airport
- Declare an emergency with ATC
- Continue above the cloud layer to destination
- ? ? ?

Situation #3: Ground Conflict in Snowy Conditions (B767 Captain's Report)

■ *Visibility was reported as variable, one mile with light snow. A normal ILS approach and landing were flown by our First Officer. We cleared the landing runway (9R) and were then cleared to taxi…short of Runway 9L at "T." The taxiways were covered with light snow, which was no problem. We taxied as instructed and held short of Runway 9L at Tango facing north. A few moments later, the 9R Tower Controller told us that there would be an aircraft taxiing into position and holding on runway 9L, and that he would wait for us. Then we were told to cross Runway 9L at Tango and to contact Ramp Control on the other side. The taxi surface was snowy, so I added power to cross 9L gradually. I turned on all the external lights and moved across the hold short line. As my aircraft moved slowly forward, my attention went to the aircraft taxiing into position at the approach end on 9L. His landing lights were on and I perceived that he was continuing to move towards us. At that moment, I realized that he was adding power and beginning his take-off roll, instead of holding in position on the runway….*

What would you have done?

- Add power to cross Runway 9L as quickly as possible
- Attempt communication with the departing aircraft
- Immediately stop the aircraft
- ? ? ?

The Rest of the Story: The Reporter's Actions

Situation #1: "The Left Throttle Would Not Retard" (MD-80 Captain's Report)

- ***The Reporter's Action:*** **Divert to an alternate airport with better weather**

■ *…I elected to divert to our nearby alternate where the weather was better. TRACON gave us vectors for the ILS. I landed and upon touchdown had the First Officer shut down the engine with the fuel lever. Because the throttle was stuck forward, the spoilers deployed and then retracted. The First Officer then redeployed the spoilers. We taxied clear of the runway and had Airfield Rescue and Fire Fighters check us over. We then taxied to the gate.*

Situation #2: "My Climb Would Not Safely Increase" (Piper Cherokee Pilot's Report)

- ***The Reporter's Action:*** **Continue above the cloud layer to destination**

■ *…Although my climb rate was less then optimal I was able to maintain altitude sufficient to continue flight without overburdening the engine pressure and temperature. My options were to immediately return to the departure airport and into IFR conditions or continue in visual conditions above the cloud layer to an airport I knew had visual flight conditions. The option to continue flight would only add five minutes to total time and would position me in an area with visual conditions if an emergency landing was required.*

I requested from the Controller that I maintain current altitude and continue direct to destination with an anticipated visual approach. I arrived at the airport without adverse engine problems and immediately pulled the plugs and checked engine status. The plugs and streamer were still intact and the oil level and smell appeared normal. The obvious lesson was to strictly observe the preflight checklist and do not deviate or perform concurrent tasks. Prior to flight perform one final walkaround.

Situation #3: Ground Conflict in Snowy Conditions (B767 Captain's Report)

- ***The Reporter's Action:*** **Immediately stop the aircraft**

■ *….I immediately stopped our aircraft with our nose 10 to 15 feet past the hold short line and directed our First Officer to tell Tower we were stopping for the aircraft taking off on Runway 9L. As he passed our position, the nose of my aircraft was WELL CLEAR of Runway 9L, and at NO TIME was either aircraft in any danger. We called Tower again and told him that we were stopped short of Runway 9L at Tango, but that our nose was 15 feet beyond the hold short line. After a few moments, we were re-cleared to cross 9L at Tango and to contact Ramp on the other side. With all external lights still on, we crossed 9L.…We were cleared to taxi to the gate and shut down. After checklists were completed, I called…and reported the event. The* [Tower] *Supervisor had not been made aware of the situation at that time…A contributing cause to this event could have been the reduced visibility from the Tower to the take-off position on 9L.*

ASRS Alerts Issued in Sept/Oct 2010	
Subject of Alert	**No. of Alerts**
Aircraft or aircraft equipment	17
ATC equipment or procedures	14
Airport facility or procedure	12
Company policies	1
Maintenance procedure	2
TOTAL	**46**

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http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov/

September/October 2010 Report Intake	
Air Carrier/Air Taxi Pilots	5115
General Aviation Pilots	1766
Controllers	1649
Cabin/Mechanics/Military/Other	857
TOTAL	**9388**